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Information Bulletin

• Grade 6 English Language Arts •

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Grade 6 English Language Arts Assessment

General Description

The Grade 6 English Language Arts assessment is composed of two parts—*Part A: Writing* and *Part B: Reading*.

Part A: Writing consists of two writing assignments—one narrative and one functional—developed to be completed in two hours. At the beginning of the two hours, students will be given time to discuss both assignments with classmates in groups of two to four, or to think alone about them. During this discussion time, students may record their ideas on the *Planning* pages provided. The allotted two hours provides students with time for planning, drafting, and revising of both the narrative and functional writing. An additional 30 minutes may be taken to complete the test.

Students may do their writing using a computer. For information about using word-processing technology to complete the written component of the achievement test, see the *General Information Bulletin, Achievement Testing Program, Grades 3, 6, and 9*.

Students may use a print or electronic dictionary (English language and/or bilingual) and a thesaurus when completing **only** *Part A: Writing*.

Part B: Reading (multiple choice) is developed to be completed in 60 minutes; however, students may take an additional 30 minutes to complete the test. The test consists of 50 multiple-choice questions based on reading selections from fiction, non-fiction, drama, poetry, and visual media. Answers are recorded on a separate machine-scorable answer sheet.

Description of Language Arts Assessment Standards

The following statements describe what is expected of Grade 6 students who are meeting the *acceptable standard* or the *standard of excellence*, based on outcomes in the *Program of Studies*. These statements represent the standards against which student achievement is measured. It is important to remember that one test cannot measure all of the outcomes in the *Program of Studies*.

Acceptable Standard

Students meeting the *acceptable standard* are able to

- communicate information and ideas for a specific audience
- use words and expressions that convey relevant, general meanings
- organize concrete, factual materials containing straightforward ideas
- recognize some complex techniques of literary structure and organization, such as cause and effect, foreshadowing, and flashback
- read relatively short, simple selections of fiction, non-fiction, prose, and poetry, and identify the main idea, sequence of events, key details, author's purpose, and imagery
- use textual clues and prior knowledge to associate the meaning of words and phrases in straightforward text
- consistently answer literal idea, detail, and relationship questions; occasionally understand implied ideas, details, and relationships

Standard of Excellence

Students meeting the *standard of excellence* are also able to

- consistently establish an appropriate focus for communication, and select ideas and language to suit different purposes and audiences
- use words and expressions that convey purposeful, specific meanings
- analyze and evaluate ideas received from a wide variety of print and non-print materials representing many perspectives
- recognize complex techniques of literary structure and/or organization, and also apply them to their own writing
- deal effectively with abstract and complex details and ideas found in longer, sophisticated selections of fiction, non-fiction, prose, and poetry
- use textual clues and prior knowledge to associate the meaning of words and phrases in complex or unfamiliar text
- readily answer literal as well as implied idea, detail, and relationship questions

Part A: Writing

Section I of *Part A: Writing* consists of a picture prompt that students are asked to respond to in the form of a story. Section I includes a page labelled *Planning* and lined pages for the students' writing.

Section II of *Part A: Writing* requires students to write for a specific audience and to fulfill a specified purpose within a given context. Specified purposes may include writing letters, reports, news articles, instructions, or other functional tasks. This year's functional writing assignment requires students to write a news article. Section II includes a page labelled *Planning* and lined pages for the students' writing.

For both sections of *Part A: Writing*,

students are asked to produce only one copy of their work. They are encouraged to make revisions and corrections directly on this copy. Because of the limited testing time, it is felt that students benefit most from spending the majority of their time in composing and revising their work, rather than in perfecting a "good copy."

Important Reminder

In the past, many students have written papers that were "off topic." Students' writing should be related to the prompt. **Students whose writing is unrelated to the prompt for functional writing will be awarded an Insufficient.**

Blueprint for Part A: Section I—Narrative Writing

The blueprint that follows outlines *Part A: Writing*, Section I, of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test. It delineates the categories under which summary data will be reported to schools and school authorities.

	Reporting Category	Description of Writing Assignment	Standards
NEW	<p>*Content (selecting ideas and details to achieve a purpose)</p> <p>Students select ideas, events, and details to support their purpose. Students describe characters and setting using details that are appropriate for the context established.</p>	<p>The narrative writing assignment requires students to respond to a picture prompt that is included in the test booklet. Students are to respond to the prompt by writing a story that the picture makes them think about.</p>	<p>Students' achievement in each reporting category will be described according to the following standard statements:</p>
NEW	<p>*Organization (organizing ideas and details into a coherent whole)</p> <p>Students organize their ideas to form a unified composition. Students establish connections or relationships among events, actions, details, and/or characters to support their purpose.</p>		<p>Meets the <i>standard of excellence</i></p> <p>Approaches the <i>standard of excellence</i></p> <p>Clearly meets the <i>acceptable standard</i></p>
NEW	<p>Sentence Structure (structuring sentences effectively)</p> <p>Students control sentence structure and use a variety of sentence types and sentence lengths to enhance communication.</p>		<p>Does not clearly meet the acceptable standard</p> <p>Clearly below the acceptable standard</p>
NEW	<p>Vocabulary (selecting and using words and expressions correctly and effectively)</p> <p>Students choose words and expressions to convey meaning appropriate for context, audience, and purpose.</p>		<p>Insufficient</p>
NEW	<p>Conventions (using the conventions of written language correctly and effectively)</p> <p>Students use conventions accurately and effectively to enhance communication.</p>		

*These categories are weighted to be worth twice as much as each of the others.

Blueprint for Part A: Section II—Functional Writing

The blueprint that follows outlines *Part A: Writing*, Section II, of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test. It delineates the categories under which summary data will be reported to schools and school authorities.

Reporting Category	Description of Writing Assignment	Standards
Content (thought and detail) Students organize and develop ideas for a specified purpose and audience.	The functional writing assignment requires students to write to a specific audience, for a specified purpose, within the context of a news article.	Students' achievement in each reporting category will be described according to the following standard statements:
Content Management (using the conventions of written language correctly and effectively) Students communicate clearly and effectively by selecting words and phrases appropriate to their purpose. Students demonstrate control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics.		Meets the <i>standard of excellence</i> Approaches the <i>standard of excellence</i> Clearly meets the <i>acceptable standard</i> Does not clearly meet the acceptable standard Clearly below the acceptable standard Insufficient

Content and Content Management are weighted equally.

Local Marking

Classroom teachers will be able to mark students' writing, using scoring guides like those in this bulletin, before returning tests to Alberta Learning.

The total score for a student's writing may be calculated by following the procedure below.

Narrative Writing

1. Assign a score of 1 to 5 for each of *content, organization, sentence structure, vocabulary, and conventions.*
2. Weight *content* and *organization* to be worth twice as much as the other categories by multiplying their scores by 2.

Maximum score possible for Narrative Writing = 35

Functional Writing

1. Assign a score of 1 to 5 for each of *content* and *content management.*
2. Multiply this total by 2.

Maximum score possible for Functional Writing = 20

Total Score

1. Add the narrative and functional scores.

Total score for Part A: Writing

Narrative Writing	___/35 (63.6%)
+ Functional Writing	___/20 (36.4%)
= Total Score	___/55 (100%)

The mark for writing is worth 50% of the total mark for Language Arts. Samples of students' writing that exemplify the scoring criteria will be provided with the test materials, to support local marking.

Marks awarded locally can be submitted to Alberta Learning and will be used as the first reading of a student's response. The papers will then be marked centrally by Alberta Learning as the second reading. Both marks contribute to the student's final mark. In the case of a discrepancy between these two marks, papers will be adjudicated by a third reading, which will determine the final mark that a paper is awarded. In this way, valid and reliable individual and group results can be reported.

Papers that are not marked locally by teachers will be marked centrally only once. At least once a day, all markers mark a copy of the same paper for inter-rater reliability. All papers will be marked centrally in Edmonton in July.

Information for Teachers Participating in Central Marking

The Learner Assessment Branch will contact superintendents in the spring for their recommendations of markers. The approximately 185 Grade 6 teachers selected will reflect proportional representation from the various regions of Alberta. To qualify for recommendation by a superintendent, a prospective marker must satisfy ALL of the following conditions:

- ☒ have a valid Alberta Permanent Professional Teaching Certificate
- ☒ have taught the course for two years or more
- ☒ be teaching the course in the current school year
- ☒ be employed by a school authority at the time of marking
- ☒ be able to mark all days

Markers will be contacted in May, and the list of markers will be finalized no later than June 16. Group leaders will meet for one day before the marking session.

Each year, we have many more teachers nominated to mark than we have spots for marking. We must make sure that we have a balance of markers reflecting the student populations in various parts of the province. As well, we attempt to balance the representation of male and female markers, and of experienced and inexperienced markers. Unfortunately, not everyone whose name is submitted is selected.

The time allotted for marking is limited, hence markers are often asked to mark on Saturday and Sunday. The marking floor is open from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., and markers are expected to be available to mark during those hours.

Scoring Guides

Narrative Writing

Content

Focus

When marking **CONTENT** appropriate for Grade 6 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writer

- establishes a context
- uses ideas and/or events that are appropriate for the established context
- uses specific details (of characters, setting, actions, events, etc.)
- demonstrates an awareness of audience

Meets the Standard of Excellence 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context is clearly established and sustained. • The ideas and/or events are consistently appropriate for the established context. • Supporting details are specific and consistently effective. • The writing captivates and holds the reader's interest and is creative and/or original.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context is clearly established and generally sustained. • The ideas and/or events are appropriate for the established context. • Supporting details are specific and generally effective. • The writing engages and generally holds the reader's interest.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context is established but may not be sustained. • The majority of the ideas and/or events are appropriate for the established context. • Supporting details are appropriate, general, and may be predictable. • The writing generally holds the reader's interest.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context is vaguely established and may not be sustained. • Some of the ideas and/or events are appropriate for the established context. • Supporting details are few and/or may be repetitive. • The writing does not hold the reader's interest.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context may be unclear and/or not sustained. • There are few ideas and/or events. • Supporting details are scant. • The writing is confusing and/or frustrating for the reader.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student has written so little that it is not possible to assess the content.

Note: Content and Organization are weighted to be worth twice as much as each of the other categories.

Organization

Focus

When marking **ORGANIZATION** appropriate for Grade 6 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writer

- introduces the topic/subject
- follows a coherent order
- establishes connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters
- brings closure to the writing

Meets the Standard of Excellence 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction is purposeful, interesting, and clearly establishes events, characters, and/or setting, and provides direction for the writing. • Events and/or details are arranged in paragraphs in a purposeful and effective order, and coherence is maintained. • Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are consistently maintained. • The ending ties events and/or actions together.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction clearly establishes events, characters, and/or setting, and provides direction for the writing. • Events and/or details are arranged in paragraphs, in a purposeful order, and coherence is generally maintained. • Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are maintained. • The ending provides an appropriate finish for events and/or actions.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction directly presents information about events, characters, and/or setting. • Events and/or details are arranged in a discernible order, although coherence may falter occasionally. • Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are generally maintained. • The ending is predictable and/or contrived, but is connected to events and/or actions.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction provides little information. • The arrangement of events and/or details is not clearly discernible, and coherence falters frequently. • Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are unclear and/or inconsistent or missing. • The ending is predictable and/or contrived, and may not be connected to events and/or actions.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction may be confusing. • The arrangement of events and/or details is haphazard and incoherent. • Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are missing. • The ending, if present, is unconnected to the events and/or actions.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Note: *Content and Organization are weighted to be worth twice as much as each of the other categories.*

Sentence Structure

Focus

When marking **SENTENCE STRUCTURE** appropriate for Grade 6 narrative writing, the marker should consider the

- writer's control of sentence structure
- effectiveness and variety of sentence type and length
- variety of sentence beginnings

Meets the Standard of Excellence 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. • Sentence type and length are consistently effective and varied. • Sentence beginnings are varied.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure is controlled. • Sentence type and length are usually effective and varied. • Sentence beginnings are often varied.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure is generally controlled but may occasionally impede the meaning. • Sentence type and length are sometimes effective and/or varied. • Some variety of sentence beginnings is evident.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure sometimes lacks control, and this can impede the meaning. • There is little variation of sentence type and length. • There is little variety of sentence beginnings.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure generally lacks control, and this severely impedes the meaning. • There is no variation of sentence type or length. • There is no variety of sentence beginnings.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Vocabulary

Focus

When marking **VOCABULARY** appropriate for Grade 6 narrative writing, the marker should consider the extent to which the writer uses

- words and expressions accurately and effectively
- specific words and expressions

Meets the Standard of Excellence 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are used accurately and effectively. • Specific words and expressions are used to create vivid images and/or to enrich details.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are used accurately and often effectively. • Specific words and expressions are frequently used to create images and/or to add clarity to details.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are generally used appropriately. • General words and expressions are sometimes used where specific words and expressions would have been more effective.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are sometimes used appropriately. • General words predominate. Specific words, if present, are frequently misused.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General words that convey only vague meanings are used.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Conventions

Focus

When marking **CONVENTIONS** appropriate for Grade 6 narrative writing, the marker should consider the extent to which the writer has control of

- mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, indenting for new speakers, etc.) and usage (agreement of subject–verb, agreement of pronoun–antecedent, etc.)
- clarity and flow of the communication

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Meets the Standard of Excellence 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is enhanced because it is essentially error-free. • Errors, if present, do not reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is sustained because it contains only minor convention errors. • Errors that are present do not reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is maintained through generally correct use of conventions. • Errors that are present rarely reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is weakened by the frequently incorrect use of conventions. • Errors often reduce the clarity and interrupt the flow of the communication.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is limited by the consistently incorrect use of conventions. • Errors severely reduce the clarity and interrupt the flow of the communication.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Content

Focus

When marking **CONTENT** appropriate for Grade 6 functional writing, the marker should consider

- effectiveness of ideas and organization of the topic
- how the purpose of the assignment is fulfilled with complete and appropriate information
- appropriateness of tone for the assignment and awareness of audience

Meets the Standard of Excellence 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ideas are well developed and organization of the topic is clear and effective. • Complete information is presented, and this information is enhanced by precise and appropriate details that effectively fulfill the purpose of the assignment. • A tone appropriate for the assignment is clearly and effectively maintained.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ideas are generally well developed and organization of the topic is generally effective. • Complete information is presented, and this information is substantiated by appropriate details that fulfill the purpose of the assignment. • A tone appropriate for the assignment is clearly maintained.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ideas are adequately developed and organization of the topic is adequate. • Sufficient information is given, and this information is supported by enough details to fulfill the purpose of the assignment. • A tone appropriate for the assignment is generally maintained.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ideas are poorly developed and organization of the topic is ineffective. • Essential information may be missing. Supporting details are scant, insignificant, and/or irrelevant. The purpose of the assignment is only partially fulfilled. • A tone appropriate for the assignment is evident but not maintained.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ideas are not developed and organization of the topic, if present, is inadequate. • Essential information and supporting details are inappropriate or lacking. The purpose of the assignment is not fulfilled. • Little awareness of tone appropriate for the assignment is evident.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment, or the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess content.

Note: Content and Content Management are equally weighted.

Please advise students that their work must be related to the assignment. Those assignments that are completely “off topic” will be awarded an Insufficient.

Content Management

Focus

When marking **CONTENT MANAGEMENT** appropriate for Grade 6 functional writing, the marker should consider

- accuracy and effectiveness of words and expressions
- control of sentence structures, usage, and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, etc.)
- clarity and flow of the communication

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Meets the Standard of Excellence 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions used are consistently accurate and effective. • The writing demonstrates confident and consistent control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. • Errors, if present, do not reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions used are usually accurate and effective. • The writing demonstrates competent and generally consistent control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. • Errors that are present do not reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions used are generally accurate and occasionally effective. • The writing demonstrates basic control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. • Errors that are present rarely reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions used are frequently inappropriate and/or misused. • The writing demonstrates faltering control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. • Errors often reduce the clarity and interrupt the flow of the communication.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions used are inaccurate and/or misused. • The writing demonstrates lack of control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. • Errors severely reduce the clarity and interrupt the flow of the communication.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Part B: Reading

Part B: Reading of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test requires students to read selections that include a variety of informational and narrative/poetic texts with implicit ideas and details. The content of these selections is sometimes abstract and is varied in content. After reading these selections, students answer 50 multiple-choice questions based on the selections.

The blueprint showing the approximate number of questions in each category appears on the next page.

Development

Reading selections are chosen according to the following general guidelines.

- Reading selections, whenever possible, should be relatively short but should contain a beginning, a middle, and an end.
- Reading selections should reflect the interests of the majority of Grade 6 students.
- Reading selections should be of appropriate difficulty for Grade 6 students.
- Canadian content should be used extensively.

The following considerations guide question development.

- Questions relating to each reading selection should be arranged from specific to general, wherever practical.
- Questions should test the students' ability to understand and analyze the reading selections and to make judgements about their form and content. Only questions dealing with significant aspects of the reading selections should be asked.

Blueprint for Part B: Reading

The blueprint for *Part B: Reading* shows the reporting categories and language function under which questions are classified. The number of questions in each category is approximate.

Reporting Category	Question Distribution by Language Function		Number and Proportion of Questions
	Informational	Narrative/Poetic	
Identifying and Interpreting Ideas and Details Students recognize explicit or implicit ideas and details and make inferences about the relationships between ideas and details.	6	9	15 (30%)
Interpreting Text Organization Students identify and analyze the author's use of genre. Students identify and analyze the author's choice of form, organizational structure, literary techniques, text features, and conventions.	4	6	10 (20%)
Associating Meaning Students use contextual clues to determine the connotative meaning of words, phrases, and figurative language.	4	6	10 (20%)
Synthesizing Ideas Students make generalizations by integrating information from an entire selection in order to identify the purpose, theme, main idea, or mood of the selection.	6	9	15 (30%)
Number and Proportion of Questions	20 (40%)	30 (60%)	50 (100%)

Preparing Students for the English Language Arts Test

Suggestions for Preparing Students

The best way to prepare students for writing the achievement tests is to teach the curriculum well and to ensure that children know what is expected. Many of the skills and attitudes that support test writing are, in fact, good skills and strategies for approaching all kinds of learning tasks.

Teachers may also wish, however, to familiarize their students with the format of both *Part A: Writing* and *Part B: Reading* by working through the questions from achievement tests that are no longer secured.

Teachers should also familiarize students with the scoring guides in this bulletin. With instruction, students may be able to use these guides effectively when evaluating their own writing or that of peers.

In 1989 and 1993, the Learner Assessment Branch published booklets entitled *Samples of Students' Writing*. These samples came from the student responses given on the 1988 and 1992 Language Arts achievement tests. These booklets are available through LRDC. Teachers are encouraged to share these samples and the accompanying commentaries with students.

Teachers are also encouraged to share the following information with their students to help them prepare for the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test.

Suggestions for Writing the Test

Part A: Writing

Students are encouraged to adopt the following strategies for writing the test:

Plan your available time carefully. We suggest that you use all the time available to you to carefully *read* the assignment and *think* about what you are being asked to do, to *plan* your writing so that it is focused, unified, and coherent, and to *proofread* your writing.

Read all the instructions carefully and do what the assignments ask you to do. The time you spend in reading and thinking about the assignments is time well spent. Many students find that highlighting or underlining key words in the assignments helps them to focus on what is expected.

Plan your writing using the pages provided. You should choose a planning strategy that helps you to focus your ideas. You may want to try a

- web
- chart
- list (main ideas, character, etc.)
- plot outline (diagram)
- RAFTS model (role, audience, focus, topic, strong verbs)

Use your reference materials. You are allowed the use of a dictionary and a thesaurus when writing Part A. Use a dictionary to look up the meanings of words that you want to use but are not completely sure about and to ensure that you spell words correctly. A thesaurus can be useful if you need to find a more precise word for the context you are developing, but you should be careful not to overuse a thesaurus.

Keep in mind the characteristics of effective writing.

- Awareness of audience (appropriateness of tone and use of correct language)
- Completeness of information (enough detail to fulfill purpose)
- Relevance of information (all details pertain to the purpose)
- Clarity of information (all details are specific and easily understood by the reader)

Proofread your work and correct errors directly on your first draft. You may double-space your writing, if you think it will allow you to make corrections more easily.

Part B: Reading

Read the material using the strategy that works best for you. You should either

- read the selection and think carefully about it before you try any of the multiple-choice questions associated with the reading selection **OR**
- read the questions first and then read the selection, keeping in mind the questions you will need to answer

Each set of multiple-choice questions is designed to take you back through the reading selection in a certain way. The questions are ordered according to the location of the answers in the passage. For example, the answer to the first question will likely appear near the beginning of the passage, and so on. Questions relating to the reading selection as a whole will appear at the end of the set of questions.

Consider all forms of information provided. Information will be presented not only in words but also in visual forms such as cartoons, pictures, or charts.

Take the time to reread the lines that are referred to in a question. Many questions contain quotations from the selection with line references indicated. It is always worthwhile to reread the lines that are referenced and consider the meanings of these lines in both their immediate context in the selection and the context of the selection as a whole.

Read carefully all four alternatives (A, B, C, and D) before choosing the answer that you think is best. Some of the questions are designed to test your ability to make a judgement. These questions will often include a bold-faced qualifier such as **best**, **most strongly**, or **most clearly** in their stems. All of the alternatives (A, B, C, and D) are, to some degree, correct, but one of the alternatives will be “best” in that it takes more of the reading selection into account or can be supported most strongly by reference to the reading selection.

Work from partial knowledge when it is appropriate to do so. If a correct or best answer does not become obvious fairly quickly, you may want to eliminate the answers that seem least appropriate and then use your judgement to select an answer from those that remain.

For further suggestions, see *Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities*, Alberta Learning, Special Programs Branch, pages LD122 to 124.

ALL of the 2000 achievement tests are secured. The 1998 and the 1999 achievement tests are no longer secured and are posted on the Alberta Learning web site <http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca>.

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